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MERSHON, BYRD POLAR JOIN FORCES TO LAUNCH NEW INITIATIVE ON CLIMATE

Published: 03 October 2013

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies and the Byrd Polar Research Center are joining forces to develop a multiyear initiative to bring together faculty and graduate students to study the impact of climate on human health, international security, and resilience of societies.

The Climate, Security, Health and Resilience initiative will sponsor a series of outside speakers, internally focused workshops and leading edge conferences focused on integrating what is known about a range of major topics regarding climate and society.

The project will bring together an interdisciplinary world-class cohort of Ohio State experts – including climatologists, geographers, sociologists, political scientists, legal experts, medical scientists, and historians -- who both study the climate itself and assess its impacts on society.

Unique to the CSHR initiative is its two complementary approaches on past and future. On the one hand, project leaders seek to “rewind” the tape of history to study similar climate-induced catastrophes in the past; on the other, they hope to “fast forward” the tape to attempt predictions of what might happen in the future based on our best understanding and climate models.

A major feature of CSHR is a series of workshops to take place in coming years on climate and health, climate and food security, climate and water security, climate and population dynamics, and climate and human conflict. These events will be designed to answer questions such as:

- How does climate and associated climate change affect disease and human health?
- How does climate affect international security, including the spawning of instability and violence and new areas of international engagement?
- How does climate affect the resilience of societies and their ability to adapt and adjust to climate challenges?

CSHR will also encourage the preparation of faculty proposals for outside funding to private, federal, and international agencies such as the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Gates Foundation, and Mellon Foundation. Students may be involved through the creation of climate-centered study abroad programs, and links will be formed with agencies doing similar research both domestically and abroad.

The initiative maps onto all three of Ohio State’s Discovery Themes: energy and environment, food production and security, and health and wellness, as well as onto the College of Arts and Sciences initiative on environment, energy and sustainability.

It is also linked to two areas of focus at the Mershon Center -- ideas, identities and decisional processes that affect security, and institutions that manage violent conflict – as well as to the broad mission of Byrd Polar -- to conduct multidisciplinary investigations of polar, alpine, and tropical processes to understand their role in the Earth’s ever-evolving climate system.

Events Scheduled So Far

Friday, October 4, 2013

Symposium on “Climate Justice in Latin America: Gender,” organized by the Center for Latin American Studies, will take place 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.

Tuesday, October 8, 2013

Mershon Center for International Security Studies

Byrd Polar Research Center

Climate, Security, Health and Resilience Initiative

https://mershoncenter.osu.edu/news/mer-shon-news/mer-shon-byrd-polar-join-forces-to-launch-new-initiative-on-climate.html[7/16/2019 1:32:50 PM]

Norman MacLeod, dean of post-graduate education and training at the Natural History Museum, University of London, will speak at 12:30 p.m. on “The Causes of Extinction: Setting the Modern Biodiversity Crisis in Context” at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.

Wednesday, October 16, 2013
Eric Klinenberg, professor of sociology, public policy, and media, culture, and communications at New York University, will speak at 4:30 p.m. about "Adaptation: Climate Change and the Future of Cities" in 165 Thompson Library, 1858 Neil Ave Mall.

Tuesday-Thursday, December 3-5, 2013
“Winterscape: A Look at Changing Ice and Changing Ways of Life” consists of three events. On December 3 at 7 p.m., the Wexner Center will present the documentary film Glacial Balance by Ethan Steinman, which takes the audience on a journey along the spine of the Andes. On December 4 at noon, a brown bag lunch at the Byrd Polar Research Center includes a discussion of the impact of climate change on water availability in one Ecuadorian community. On December 5 at COSI, Lonnie Thompson will explain how science allows us to understand Earth's past climate and how the choices we make today will impact our future.

Organizing Committee
J. Craig Jenkins, Director of the Mershon Center and Professor of Sociology, Political Science and Environmental Science
Ellen Mosley-Thompson, Director of the Byrd Polar Research Center and Distinguished University Professor of Geography (Atmospheric Science)
Geoffrey Parker, Distinguished University Professor, Andreas Dorpalen Professor of European History, Mershon Associate
Daniel Sui, Chair of Geography and SBS Distinguished Professor of Geography and Public Health, Professor in the John Glenn School of Public Affairs
Lonnie Thompson, Distinguished University Professor of Earth Sciences

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